

cere regard which their uniformly pleasant relations with him have inspired & the deep regret which they feel upon the occasion of his retirement."

TELEPHONE MATTERS.

The Bell Telephone Co.

Full particulars of the hearing of this Co.'s appeal against the assessment of its plant in Toronto were given in our Jan. issue, pg. 31. The Board of County Judges made a sweeping reduction, as will be seen by the following figures showing the assessment as made by the city & as reduced by the judges:—

	Before appeal.	After appeal.
Poles, wires & conduits	\$377,992	\$53,900
Temperance Street switchboard	177,174	12,000
Yorkville Avenue & Parkdale switchboards	50,733	3,900
Land & buildings	32,750	32,750
Total	\$638,649	\$102,550

The figures on the land & buildings were not disturbed, an arrangement having been arrived at between the parties. The governing decision was the much-discussed decision of the Court of Appeal in City of Hamilton v. Bell Telephone Co., by which the attachments of the Co. were assessed as scrap metal, instead of as a part of a growing concern. The basis of judgment of the Court of Appeal is understood to be a clause in the statute which provides that the property of such concerns shall be assessed separately in each ward, from which the court concluded the wires or poles of the Co. in one ward would be valueless except for their raw material. It is said the Toronto City Council will make an effort to secure an amendment to the law from the Ontario Legislature.

The Co. has decided to place more of its wires in Hamilton, Ont., underground. At present the underground system runs from the headquarters along Hughson St. to King William St., thence over to John St., on Main St. from Hughson to Macnab St., & from the Co.'s offices along Hughson south to Jackson

St., altogether about ½ mile. The idea is to extend this system south to Hannah St., east to Wellington St., & west to Bay or Hess Sts. The extension may possibly also include a duct northward to Merrick St.

The Megantic Telephone Co., Thetford Mines, Que., has been dissolved.

The Victoria & Inverness Telephone Co., of which A. H. Sutherland, Baddeck, N.S., is Sec.-Treas., is arranging to build lines in Inverness & Victoria Counties, Cape Breton, the proposal being to connect Northeast Margaree, Middle River, Big Baddeck, Baddeck, Nyanza, & Whycomagh with Orangedale on the I.C.R. Professor Bell, who has a summer house at Baddeck, Cape Breton, is said to be interested in the undertaking.

The British Columbia Telephones, Ltd., has been authorized to carry on business in B.C. The head office of the Co. is at Huddersfield, Eng. The capital is £100,000, divided into 3,000 preference shares of £10 each, & 7,000 ordinary shares of £10 each. The head office in B.C. is at Vancouver, W. Farrell, representative in B.C. of the Yorkshire Guarantee & Securities Corporation, being attorney for the Co.

The British Columbia Legislature has appointed a committee to enquire into the number of hours the female employees at the central office of the Victoria & Esquimalt Telephone Co. in Victoria are employed each day, the number of days that constitute a week's work, & the remuneration paid each employee, together with any information connected with the working of the system that may be deemed necessary by the committee; with power to send for persons & papers, & examine witnesses under oath. In moving for the committee Mr. Smith, of Nanaimo, said that complaints had been made to him by some of the employees of the Co., & as it was a chartered company the house had a right to obtain the information.

A New York despatch says the remarkable possibilities in the utilization of the long distance telephone were strikingly demonstrated on Feb. 4 by a novel plan carried out by the

alumni of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Simultaneously the local alumni societies in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago & St. Louis, sat down to their annual banquets, & one toastmaster presided over the scattered festivities. The banquet halls in the five cities were put upon one grand circuit of a long distance telephone, whereby each heard the speeches delivered in all the others. At each plate was placed a tiny oblong telephone receiver, & immediately after the punch was served, the diners, by holding the little instruments to their ears, listened to after-dinner speeches hundreds of miles away.

Express Companies Items.

The Dominion Ex. Co. has issued a new list of officers & mileage table.

The Alaska Pacific Ex. Co. will, General Manager Hall informs us, continue its service over the White Pass & Yukon Ry., although the latter has organized the White Pass & Yukon Express Co.

The New York Sun complains about the systematic opening of parcels sent by mail. This kind of tampering with both parcel & letter post matter is practised to an extent not generally suspected. It drives much & will drive more mail business to the express companies.

The B.C. Ex. Co. carried gold to the value of \$216,040.30 out of Cariboo in 1898. The total output for Cariboo for the year was over \$250,000. It is estimated that about \$50,000 was brought down by Chinese & other individual miners, which was not included in the figures above.

The Dominion Ex. Co. gives notice that the restrictions which heretofore limited the amount of special collections, notes, drafts, accounts or bills, to \$100 have been removed. Collections in any amount may be received to be returned at the special rates, between all points on this Co.'s lines & the lines of Canadian Express Co. in Canada & the U.S. To & from points on American Express Co.'s lines in Canada the present limit of \$100 will apply.

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